

“PSALMS WE NEED TO SING”

Psalm 37

September 23, 2018

Psalms 37

*“Do not fret because of evildoers,
Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.
For they shall soon be cut down like the grass,
And wither as the green herb.
Trust in the Lord, and do good;
Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.
Delight yourself also in the Lord,
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.
Commit your way to the Lord,
Trust also in Him,
And He shall bring it to pass.
He shall bring forth your righteousness as the
light,
And your justice as the noonday.
Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him;
Do not fret because of him who prospers in his
way,
Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to
pass.
Cease from anger, and forsake wrath;
Do not fret — it only causes harm.
For evildoers shall be cut off;
But those who wait on the Lord,
They shall inherit the earth.
For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no
more;
Indeed, you will look carefully for his place,*

*But it shall be no more.
But the meek shall inherit the earth,
And shall delight themselves in the abundance of
peace.
The wicked plots against the just,
And gnashes at him with his teeth.
The Lord laughs at him,
For He sees that his day is coming.
The wicked have drawn the sword
And have bent their bow,
To cast down the poor and needy,
To slay those who are of upright conduct.
Their sword shall enter their own heart,
And their bows shall be broken.
A little that a righteous man has
Is better than the riches of many wicked.
For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,
But the Lord upholds the righteous.
The Lord knows the days of the upright,
And their inheritance shall be forever.
They shall not be ashamed in the evil time,
And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.
But the wicked shall perish;
And the enemies of the Lord,
Like the splendor of the meadows, shall vanish.
Into smoke they shall vanish away.
The wicked borrows and does not repay,
But the righteous shows mercy and gives.
For those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth,
But those cursed by Him shall be cut off.
The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord,
And He delights in his way.*

*Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down;
For the Lord upholds him with His hand.
I have been young, and now am old;
Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his descendants begging bread.
He is ever merciful, and lends;
And his descendants are blessed.
Depart from evil, and do good;
And dwell forevermore.
For the Lord loves justice,
And does not forsake His saints;
They are preserved forever,
But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off.
The righteous shall inherit the land,
And dwell in it forever.
The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom,
And his tongue talks of justice.
The law of his God is in his heart;
None of his steps shall slide.
The wicked watches the righteous,
And seeks to slay him.
The Lord will not leave him in his hand,
Nor condemn him when he is judged.
Wait on the Lord,
And keep His way,
And He shall exalt you to inherit the land;
When the wicked are cut off, you shall see it.
I have seen the wicked in great power,
And spreading himself like a native green tree.
Yet he passed away, and behold, he was no more;
Indeed I sought him, but he could not be found.
Mark the blameless man, and observe the upright;*

*For the future of that man is peace.
But the transgressors shall be destroyed together;
The future of the wicked shall be cut off.
But the salvation of the righteous is from the
Lord;
He is their strength in the time of trouble.
And the Lord shall help them and deliver them;
He shall deliver them from the wicked,
And save them,
Because they trust in Him.*

INTRODUCTION: This is a Psalm written by David in his mature years (**v.25**) and in it he discussed the age-old problem of why the righteous suffer while the wicked seem to prosper. Those who believe in God sometimes wonder why God allows the wicked to succeed while the righteous suffer. Every follower of Christ needs desperately to grasp the lessons taught here. Many anxieties in individual's lives and most church problems could be solved if the principle laid down here were carried out.

David writes from a vast experience.

Psalms 37:25

**“I have been young, and now am old;
Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his descendants begging bread.”**

The Psalm can be likened unto the writing of **Job** and **Psalm 73**.

(Note Psalm 73:3-13)

Psalms 73:3-13

**“For I was envious of the boastful,
When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.
For there are no pangs in their death,
But their strength is firm.
They are not in trouble as other men,
Nor are they plagued like other men.
Therefore pride serves as their necklace;
Violence covers them like a garment.
Their eyes bulge with abundance;
They have more than heart could wish.
They scoff and speak wickedly concerning
oppression;
They speak loftily.
They set their mouth against the heavens,
And their tongue walks through the earth.
Therefore his people return here,
And waters of a full cup are drained by them.
And they say, "How does God know?
And is there knowledge in the Most High?"
Behold, these are the ungodly,
Who are always at ease;
They increase in riches.
Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain,
And washed my hands in innocence.”**

The Psalmist wishes us to see that it's not what happens here, but hereafter that really counts. When one views time in light of eternity, values have a way of changing. What if the righteous

suffers? What if the wicked prosper? In eternity, all inequities will be balanced and all wrongs will be made right.

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:

Luke 16:25

“But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.’”

At times, it seems that God is doing nothing to concern Himself with major issues. Does He really care? Is He neither compassionate or powerful? Like any mature believer who had been through his own share of suffering, David took the long view of the situation and evaluated the immediate and the transient in terms of the ultimate and the eternal.

Psalms 73:17-26

**“Until I went into the sanctuary of God;
Then I understood their end.
Surely You set them in slippery places;
You cast them down to destruction.
Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment!
They are utterly consumed with terrors.
As a dream when one awakes,
So, Lord, when You awake,
You shall despise their image.
Thus my heart was grieved,**

**And I was vexed in my mind.
I was so foolish and ignorant;
I was like a beast before You.
Nevertheless I am continually with You;
You hold me by my right hand.
You will guide me with Your counsel,
And afterward receive me to glory.
Whom have I in heaven but You?
And there is none upon earth that I desire
besides You.
My flesh and my heart fail;
But God is the strength of my heart and my
portion forever.”**

Some of my favorite verses are in **Psalm 37**.

Psalms 37:3

**“Trust in the Lord, and do good;
Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.”**

Psalms 37:4

**“Delight yourself also in the Lord,
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.”**

Psalms 37:5

**“Commit your way to the Lord,
Trust also in Him,
And He shall bring it to pass.”**

Psalms 37:7

**“Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him;
Do not fret because of him who prospers in his
way,
Because of the man who brings wicked schemes
to pass.”**

Psalms 37:18

**“The Lord knows the days of the upright,
And their inheritance shall be forever.”**

Psalms 37:21

**“The wicked borrows and does not repay,
But the righteous shows mercy and gives.”**

Psalms 37:23

**“The steps of a good man are ordered by the
Lord,
And He delights in his way.”**

Psalms 37:25

**“I have been young, and now am old;
Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken,
Nor his descendants begging bread.”**

Psalms 37:28

**“For the Lord loves justice,
And does not forsake His saints;
They are preserved forever,
But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut
off.”**

Psalms 37:31

**“The law of his God is in his heart;
None of his steps shall slide.”**

Psalms 37:37

**“Mark the blameless man, and observe the
upright;
For the future of that man is peace.”**

For an overview into several encouraging
assurances to believers.

I. THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD 1-11

(The Lord can be trusted)

- Note one negative instruction, **“Don’t fret”**
1,7, 8

- Note four positive instructions,

“Trust in the Lord” 3

“Delight in the Lord” 4

“Commit yourself to the Lord” 5-6

“Rest in the Lord” 7

A. Fret Not 1

“fret” – means to burn or get heated up. When we see evil in the world we ought to feel our holy anger (**Ephesians 4:26**).

But to envy people only leads to fretting and fretting leads to anger. The warning is not directed against righteous anger but against a discontented and bitter spirit, causing hatred to man and revolt against God. The root of the sin here lies in being discontented with and questioning what God has ordained. It amounts to plain disbelief. When a Christian is “*fretting*,” he is not “*trusting*.”

B. Trust In The Lord 3

A fretful heart is not a trusting heart.

Note faith and trust go together.

“Trust in the lord and do good” – this is always God’s order. These always go together and never can be reversed. **Trust**; then **do**. Works follow faith.

C. **Delight In The Lord 4**

“delight” – to be brought up in luxury; to be pampered. It speaks of the abundance of the blessings we have in the Lord Himself, totally, apart from what He gives us. To enjoy the blessing and ignore the blesser is to practice idolatry. In Jesus Christ, we have all God’s treasures.

If we truly delight in the Lord, then the chief desire of our heart will be to know Him better and the Lord will satisfy that desire. This is not a promise for those who want “things,” but for those who want more of God in their lives.

D. **Commit Your Ways To The Lord 5-6**

Where there is trust and delight, there will be committal. Some commit to their way of reason, or an impulse, and some to passion. But God is the only worthy One of complete commitment.

Verb means *“to roll off our burden.”*

1 Peter 5:7

“casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”

E. Rest In The Lord 7-11

Verb means to be silent, be still. It describes a calm surrender to the Lord.

Matthew 11:28

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

V7 “wait patiently for Him”

Psalms 37:8

**“Cease from anger, and forsake wrath;
Do not fret — it only causes harm.”**

Stay occupied with the positive exhortations

II. THE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF GOD 12-20

Since God understands our situation, we should not fear.

The wicked plot against the poor and needy **(7, 12, 32)**. Like wild beasts, they desire to devour them, yet the Lord knows that their own judgment is coming. Their weapons will turn against them; **V15**.

God upholds the righteous **VV16-17**.

In **V18** **“know”** refers to much more than intellectual understanding, God knows what’s going on; but indicates that He is involved and caring for us daily.

Also in **V18** the suggestion of something beyond the needs of this life. The Psalmist catches a glimpse of the eternal.

V16 Righteous may have little but in the end, it will prove more than all the possessions of the wicked.

III. THE FAVOR OF GOD 21-31 (The Lord Blesses His People)

V21-22 The Lord blesses them first of all with provision of their daily needs.

This isn’t a promise for every believer at all times in all places, for many believers have died in poverty and hunger. It’s a generalization that proves true in so many cases that we can safely apply it to life.

V23-24 The Lord gives protection.

“Ordered” – secured, established

Jude 24

**“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,
And to present you faultless
Before the presence of His glory with
exceeding joy,”**

V25-26 The Lord gives His presence with His people. David is testifying to God’s faithfulness.

Luke 6:38

“Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

V27-29 The Lord gives His power to His people. God gives righteousness in character and justice in conduct. **V28** is a reminder that God’s blessings on the godly continue in the lives of their children, but the descendants of the wicked are cut off.

V30-31 God gives His promises to His children in His word. God’s word in the heart is the secret of a holy life.

IV. THE FUTURE WITH GOD 32-40

These verses return to the main subject, the seeming prosperity of the wicked and the adversity of the righteous. Why do the godly suffer while the wicked seem to live it up?

3 images illustrate God's judgement of those who reject Him and rebel against His law.

1. The Court Trial 32-34

2. The Tree 35-36

3. The Rescue 37-40

- The Psalmist knows the Lord is the highest judge and He knows how to deliver the righteous.
- The godly are pictured by the fruitful tree

Psalms 1:3

“He shall be like a tree

Planted by the rivers of water,

That brings forth its fruit in its season,

Whose leaf also shall not wither;

And whatever he does shall prosper.”

The ungodly by a luxurious (overbearing and towering) shrub or tree, planted in its native soil where its roots can go down deep (**35-36**). Not only did the tree die and fall, but there was no evidence left behind that there had ever been a tree there at all. So God will do to the wicked, who appear to be successful and permanent but are destined for judgement.

- God rescues the righteous **37-40**
There is a future for the man of peace, why?
Because they trust in the Lord **39-40**.